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# THE JOURNALISTIC CODE OF ETHICS

*A Collection of Codes, Creeds, and Suggestions for the Guidance of Editors and Publishers*

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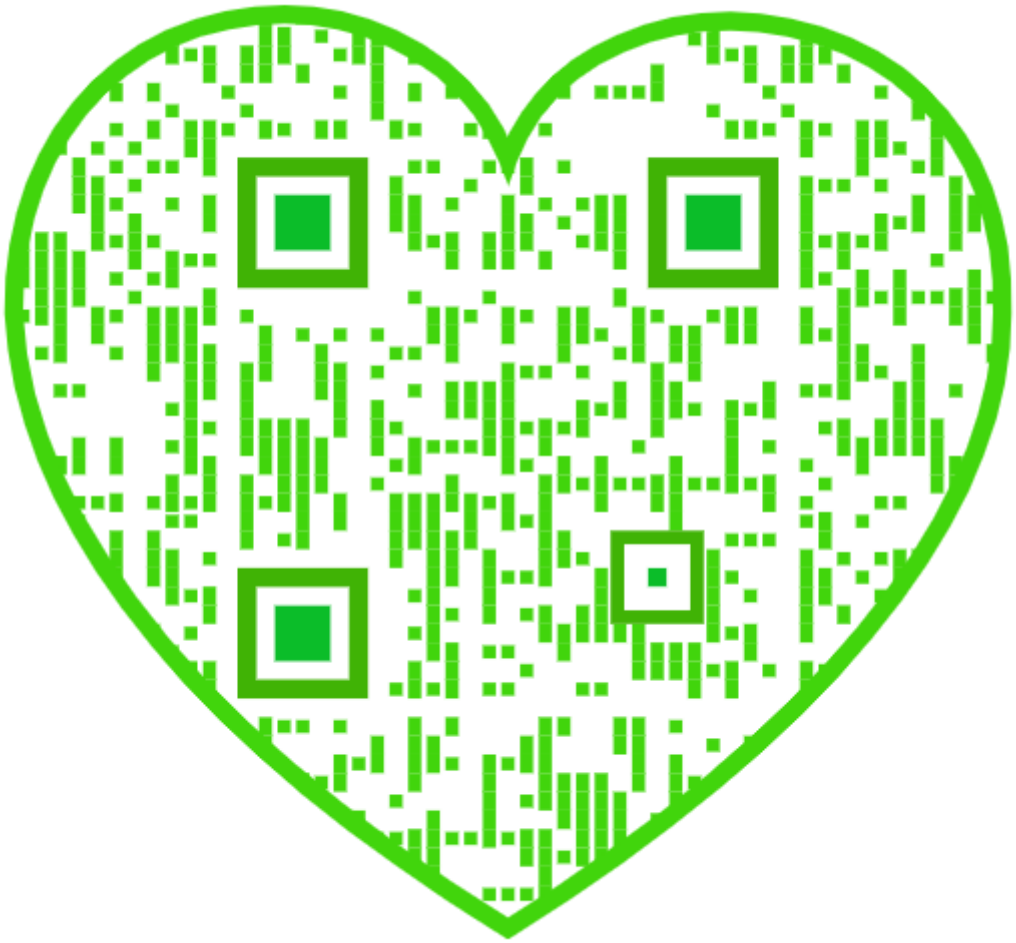

# THE JOURNALISTIC CODE OF ETHICS

*To my mind there is no occupation in which men engage, not even the so-called learned professions,—law, medicine, and theology,—which demands a higher standard of ethics in its pursuit than journalism, and this because of its extraordinary power and opportunities in affecting the public welfare.—Samuel Bowles.*

Newspaper men do not deny the need and the value of a code of ethics, however much they may differ as to just what it should contain, how it should be formulated, how it should be enforced. Some may believe that an unwritten code with professional opinion behind it will suffice. If the acid test of a profession is its possession of a code of ethics enforced by a strong organization, then journalism is not a profession. More and more, however, newspaper men refer to their vocation as a profession and to themselves as journalists, and more and more they are agitating for a set of rules of conduct.

In their publications and in their speeches, newspaper men are discussing ethical questions as they pertain to their own methods. Individual newspapers have set up codes, and newspaper men have written creeds which are in effect codes. Every decent newspaper has a more or less definitely formulated declaration of moral precepts for the members of its staff, but the need is increasingly felt that such shadowy substitute is not enough. Noah Porter said:

"That the judgments of men concerning the right and the wrong of particular actions are very largely the products of their circumstances and their education, is too obvious to admit of question."

This is pre-eminently true of the practice of journalism.

To indicate the trend toward ethical standardization of the newspaper press is the purpose of this paper rather than to argue for the very apparent need. There have been brought together here codes, creeds, rules, and regulations—some old,

some new, some officially adopted, and some only suggestive; some from the hands of practical newspaper men, and some of the academic type. All should prove helpful to that national committee which will at some not distant day attack the task of drawing up a code of ethics for journalism that will be adopted by some sort of a superorganization of newspaper editors and publishers.

## The State of Oregon

The Oregon State Editorial Association and the annual Oregon Newspaper Conference in joint session at the School of Journalism of the University of Oregon adopted the following code January 14, 1922. It was written by Professor Colin Dyment of the Oregon School of Journalism.

*"Not only all arts and sciences but all actions directed by choice aim at some good."*

*—Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, I, 1.*

### PREAMBLE

We believe in the teaching of the great ethicists that a general state of happiness and well-being is attainable throughout the world; and that this state is the chief end-in-view of society.

We recognize an instinct in every good man that his utterances and his deeds should make a reasonable and continuous contribution toward this ultimate state, in the possibility of which we reiterate our belief, however remote it may now seem.

We believe that men collectively should also follow the principles of practice that guide the ethical individual. For whatever purpose men are associated, we believe they should endeavor to make the reasonable and continuous contribution that distinguishes the ethical man. And all the agencies and instrumentalities employed by men, singly or collectively, should be based upon the best ethical practice of the time, so that the end-in-view of society may thereby be hastened.

Of all these agencies the printed word is most widely diffused and most powerful. The printed word is the single instrument of the profession we represent, and the extent to which it is shaping the thoughts and the conduct of peoples is measureless. We therefore pronounce the ethical responsibility of journalism the greatest of the professional responsibilities, and we desire to accept our responsibility, now and hereafter, to the utmost

extent that is right and reasonable in our respective circumstances.

Accordingly we adopt for our guidance the following code, which shall be known as the Oregon Code of Ethics for Journalism.

## I. SINCERITY; TRUTH

The foundation of ethical journalism is sincerity. The sincere journalist will be honest alike in his purposes and in his writings. To the best of his capacity to ascertain truth, he will always be truthful. It is his attitude toward truth that distinguishes the ethical from the unethical writer. It is naturally not possible that all writing can be without error; but it can always be without deliberate error. There is no place in journalism for the dissembler; the distorter; the prevaricator; the suppressor; or the dishonest thinker.

The first section of this code therefore provides that we shall be continuously sincere in professional practice; and sincerity as journalists means, for example, that:

1. We will put accuracy above all other considerations in the written word, whether editorial, advertisement, article, or news story.

2. We will interpret accuracy not merely as the absence of actual misstatement, but as the presence of whatever is necessary to prevent the reader from making a false deduction.

3. In an ethical attitude toward truth, we will be open at all times to conviction, for the sincere journalist, while fearless and firm, will never be stubborn; therefore we will never decline to hear and consider new evidence.

4. If new evidence forces a change of opinion, we will be as free in the acknowledgment of the new opinion as in the utterance of the old.

5. We will promote a similar attitude in others toward truth, not asking or permitting employes to write things which as sincere journalists we would not ourselves write.

## II. CARE; COMPETENCY; THOROUGHNESS

Inaccuracy in journalism is commonly due more to lack of mental equipment than to wilfulness of attitude. The ill-equipped man cannot be more competent as a journalist than he can as a doctor or engineer. Given an ethical attitude, the contribution that each journalist makes to his community and to society is nearly in ratio to his competency. We regard

journalism as a precise and a learned profession, and it is therefore the second part of this code that:

6. By study and inquiry and observation, we will constantly aim to improve ourselves, so that our writings may be more authentic, and of greater perspective, and more conducive to the social good.

7. We will consider it an essential in those we employ that they not merely be of ethical attitude, but reasonably equipped to carry out their ideals.

8. We will make care our devotion in the preparation of statements of fact and in the utterance of opinion.

9. We will advocate in our respective communities the same thoroughness, sound preparation, and pride of craft, that we desire in ourselves, our employes, and our associates.

10. We are accordingly the active enemies of superficiality and pretense.

### III. JUSTICE; MERCY; KINDLINESS

Liberty of the press is, by constitution, statute, and custom, greater in the United States than anywhere else in the world. This liberty exists for our press so that the liberty of the whole people may thereby be guarded. It so happens that at times the liberty of the press is exercised as license to infringe upon the rights of groups and of individuals: because custom and law have brought about certain immunities, it happens that in haste or zeal or malice or indifference, persons are unjustly dealt by. Yet the freedom of the press should at all times be exercised as the makers of the constitution, and the people themselves through their tolerance, have intended it. The reputations of men and women are sacred in nature and not to be torn down lightly. We therefore pronounce it appropriate to include in this code that:

11. We will not make "privileged utterance" a cloak for unjust attack, or spiteful venting, or carelessness in investigation, in the cases of parties or persons.

12. We will aim to protect, within reason, the rights of individuals mentioned in public documents, regardless of the effect on "good stories" or upon editorial policy.

13. We will deal by all persons alike so far as is humanly possible, not varying from the procedure of any part of this code because of the wealth, influence, or personal situation of the persons concerned, except as hereinafter provided.

14. It shall be one of our canons that mercy and kindliness are legitimate considerations in any phase of journalism; and

that if the public or social interest seems to be best conserved by suppression, we may suppress; but the motive in such instances must always be the public or social interest, and not the personal or commercial interest.

15. We will try so to conduct our publication, or to direct our writing, that justice, kindliness, and mercy will characterize our work.

### IV. MODERATION; CONSERVATISM; PROPORTION

Since the public takes from the journalist so great a proportion of the evidence upon which it forms its opinions, obviously that evidence should be of high type. The writer who makes his appeal to the passions rather than to the intellect is too often invalid as a purveyor of evidence because his facts are out of perspective. By improper emphasis, by skillful arrangement, or by devices of typography or rhetoric, he causes the formation in the reader's mind of unsound opinion. This practice is quite as improper as and frequently is more harmful than actual prevarication. Through this code we desire to take a position against so-called sensational practice by acceptance of the following canons:

16. We will endeavor to avoid the injustice that springs from hasty conclusion in editorial or reportorial or interpretative practice.

17. We will not overplay news or editorial for the sake of effect when such procedure may lead to false deductions in readers' minds.

18. We will regard accuracy and completeness as more vital than our being the first to print.

19. We will try to observe due proportion in the display of news to the end that inconsequential matter may not seem to take precedence in social importance over news of public significance.

20. We will in all respects in our writing and publishing endeavor to observe moderation and steadiness.

21. Recognizing that the kaleidoscopic changes in news tend to keep the public processes of mind at a superficial level, we will try to maintain a news and an editorial policy that will be less ephemeral in its influence upon social thought.

### V. PARTISANSHIP; PROPAGANDA

We believe that the public has confidence in the printed word of journalism in proportion as it is able to believe in the competency of journalists and have trust in their motives. Lack of trust in our motives may arise from the suspicion that we shape our writings to suit non-social interests, or that we open

our columns to propaganda, or both. Accordingly we adopt the following professional canons:

22. We will resist outside control in every phase of our practice, believing that the best interests of society require intellectual freedom in journalism.

23. We will rise above party and other partisanship in writing and publishing, supporting parties and issues only so far as we sincerely believe them to be in the public interest.

24. We will not permit, unless in exceptional cases, the publishing of news and editorial matter not prepared by ourselves or our staffs, believing that original matter is the best answer to the peril of propaganda.

### VI. PUBLIC SERVICE AND SOCIAL POLICY

We dispute the maxim sometimes heard that a newspaper should follow its constituency in public morals and policy rather than try to lead it. We do not expect to be so far ahead of our time that our policies will be impractical; but we do desire to be abreast of the best thought of the time, and if possible to be its guide. It is not true that a newspaper should be only as advanced in its ethical atmosphere as it conceives the average of its readers to be. No man who is not in ethical advance of the average of his community should be in the profession of journalism. We declare therefore as follows:

25. We will keep our writings and our publications free from unrefinement, except so far as we may sincerely believe publication of sordid details to be for the social good.

26. We will consider all that we write or publish for public consumption in the light of its effect upon social policy, refraining from writing or from publishing if we believe our material to be socially detrimental.

27. We will regard our privilege of writing for publication or publishing for public consumption as an enterprise that is social as well as commercial in character, and therefore will at all times have an eye against doing anything counter to social interest.

28. We believe it an essential part of this policy that we shall not be respecters of persons.

### VII. ADVERTISING AND CIRCULATION

We repudiate the principle of "letting the buyer beware." We cannot agree to guarantee advertising, but we assume a definite attitude toward the advertising that we write, solicit, or print. We believe that the same canons of truth and justice

should apply in advertising and circulation as we are adopting for news and editorial matter. We therefore agree to the following business principles:

29. We will cooperate with those social interests whose business it is to raise the ethical standard of advertising.

30. We will discourage and bar from our columns advertising which in our belief is intended to deceive the reader in his estimate of what is advertised. (This clause is intended to cover the many phases of fraud, and unfair competition, and the advertising of articles that seem likely to be harmful to the purchaser's morals or health.)

31. We will not advertise our own newspaper or its circulation boastfully, or otherwise, in terms not in harmony with the clauses of this code of ethics. (This is intended to cover misleading statements to the public or to advertisers as to the whole number of copies printed, number of paid-up subscribers, number of street sales, and percentage of local circulation.)

32. We will not make our printing facilities available for the production of advertising which we believe to be socially harmful or fraudulent in its intent.

To the foregoing code we subscribe heartily as a part of our duty to society and of our belief that the salvation of the world can come only through the acceptance and practice by the people of the world of a sound and practical ethical philosophy.

## Report of Resolutions Committee

*(Adopted by Oregon State Editorial Association, January 14, 1922)*

*Whereas,* We believe that the newspaper profession is one of the most honorable, the most influential and most important of the professions and should therefore be the most careful of all of them in maintaining high ideals of service, promoting a high consideration for public and private morals; and

*Whereas,* We are convinced that too much stress laid upon scandals, crimes, and stories of immorality has a bad influence upon the public mind, especially upon those minds that are young and impressionable; therefore, be it

*Resolved,* That while we recognize the duty devolving upon a newspaper to publish the news, in reference to these matters, yet we urge that salacious details be not overemphasized and we especially urge the various press associations to refrain from unduly emphasizing this class of news in their dispatches.

## The State of Missouri

The Missouri State Press Association was among the first to adopt a code of ethics. It is in part as follows:

### PREAMBLE

In America, where the stability of the government rests upon the approval of the people, it is essential that newspapers, the medium through which the people draw their information, be developed to a high point of efficiency, stability, impartiality, and integrity. The future of the republic depends on the maintenance of a high standard among journalists. Such a standard cannot be maintained unless the motives and conduct of the members of our profession are such as merit approval and confidence.

The profession of journalism is entitled to stand side by side with the other learned professions and is, far more than any other, interwoven with the lines of public service. The journalist cannot consider his profession rightly unless he recognizes his obligation to the public. A newspaper does not belong solely to its owner and is not fulfilling its highest functions if used selfishly. Therefore, the Missouri Press Association presents the following principles as a general guide, not a set form of rules, for the practice of journalism:

### EDITORIAL

We declare as a fundamental principle that truth is the basis of all correct journalism. To go beyond the truth, either in headline or text, is subversive of good journalism. To suppress the truth, when it properly belongs to the public, is a betrayal of public faith.

Editorial comment should always be fair and just, and not controlled by business or political experiences. Nothing should be printed editorially which the writer will not readily acknowledge as his own in public.

Control of news or comment for business considerations is not worthy of a newspaper. The news should be covered, written, and interpreted wholly and at all times in the interest of the public. Advertisers have no claims on newspaper favor except in their capacity as readers and as members of the community.

No person who controls the policy of a newspaper should at the same time hold office or have affiliations, the duties of which conflict with the public service that his newspaper should render.

### ADVERTISING

It is not good ethics nor good business to accept advertisements that are dishonest, deceptive, or misleading. Concerns or individuals who want to use our columns to sell questionable stocks or anything else which promises great returns for small investment, should always be investigated. Our readers should be protected from advertising sharks. Rates should be fixed at a figure which will yield a profit and never cut. The reader deserves a square deal and the advertiser the same kind of treatment.

Advertising disguised as news or editorial should not be accepted. Political advertising especially should show at a glance that it is advertising. It is just as bad to be bribed by the promise of political patronage as to be bribed by political cash.

To tear down a competitor in order to build up oneself is not good business, nor is it ethical. Newspaper controversies should never enter newspaper columns. Good business demands the same treatment to a competitor that one would like a competitor to give oneself. Create new business rather than try to take away that of another.

Advertising should never be demanded from a customer simply because he has given it to another paper. Merit, product, and service should be the standard.

### SUBSCRIPTION

The claiming of more subscribers than are actually on the paid list in order to secure larger advertising prices is obtaining money under false pretense. The advertiser is entitled to know just what the newspaper is selling to him. Subscription lists made up at nominal prices or secured by means of premiums or contests are to be strictly avoided.

### SUMMARY

In every line of journalistic endeavor we recognize and proclaim our obligation to the public, our duty to regard always the truth, to deal justly and walk humbly before the gospel of unselfish service.

## The State of Kansas

The Kansas State Editorial Association as long ago as 1910 placed itself on record by adopting a code written by W. E. Miller, owner of the St. Mary's Star. Mr. Miller died last August, but his code will remain as a monument to him.

## FOR THE PUBLISHER

### IN ADVERTISING

*Definition.*—Advertising is news, or views, of a business or professional enterprise which leads directly to its profits or increased business.

News of the industrial or commercial development of an institution which in no way has a specific bearing upon the merits of its products is not advertising.

Besides news which leads to a profit, advertising also includes communications and reports, cards of thanks, etc., over the space of which the editor has no control. Charges for the latter become more in the nature of a penalty to restrict their publication.

*Responsibility.*—The authorship of an advertisement should be so plainly stated in the context or at the end that it could not avoid catching the attention of the reader before he has left the matter.

Unsigned advertisements in the news columns should either be preceded or followed by the word "advertisement" or its abbreviation.

*Freedom of Space.*—We hold the right of the publisher to become a broker in land, loan, rental, and mercantile transactions through his want and advertising columns, and condemn any movement of those following such lines to restrict this right of the publisher to the free sale of his space for the purpose of bringing buyer and seller together.

This shall not be construed to warrant the publisher as such in handling the details, terms, etc., of the trade, but merely in safeguarding his freedom in selling his space to bring the buyer and seller together, leaving the bargaining to the principals.

Our advertising is to bring together the buyer and the seller, and we are not concerned whether it is paid for and ordered by the producer, the consumer, or a middleman.

Acceding to any other desires on the part of traders is knocking the foundations out from under the advertising business—the freedom of space. We hold that the freedom of space (where the payment is not a question) should only be restricted by the moral decency of the advertising matter.

We hold that the freedom of space denies us the right to sign any contract with a firm which contains any restrictions against the wording of the copy which we may receive from any other firm, even to the mentioning of the goods of the first firm by name.

*Compensation.*—We condemn the signing of contracts carrying with them the publication of any amount of free reading matter.

We condemn the acceptance of any exchange articles, trade checks, or courtesies in payment for advertising, holding that all advertising should be paid for in cash.

We condemn the giving of secret rebates upon the established advertising rate as published.

*Rates.*—All advertising rates should be on a unit per thousand basis and all advertisers are entitled to a full knowledge of the circulation, not only of the quantity but also of the distribution. Statements of circulation should show the number of bona fide subscribers, the number of exchanges, the number of complimentaries, and the number sold to newsdealers, and if possible the locality of distribution, in a general way.

*Position.*—Position contracts should be charged a fixed percentage above the established rate of the paper, and no contracts should be signed wherein a failure to give the position required results in a greater reduction from the established rate than the position premium is greater than the established rate.

*Comparisons.*—We consider it beneath the dignity of a publisher to place in his columns statements which make invidious comparisons between the amount of advertising carried or the circulation of his paper and that of his competitor.

*Press Agents and Unpaid Advertising.*—The specific trade name of an article of commerce, or the name of a merchant,

manufacturer, or professional man *with reference* to his wares, products, or labors should not be mentioned in a pure news story.

We condemn as against *moral decency* the publication of any advertisement which will obviously lead to any form of retrogression, such as private medical personals, indecent massage parlor advertisements, private matrimonial advertisements, physician's or hospital's advertisement for the care of private diseases, which carry in them any descriptive or suggestive matter, of the same.

IN CIRCULATION

*Definition.*—Circulation is the entire list of first-hand readers of a publication and comprises the paid readers, complimentary readers, exchange readers, and advertising readers.

*Compensation.*—Subscriptions should be solicited and received only on a basis of cash consideration, the paper and its payment being the only elements to the transaction.

*Newsdealers.*—The purchase of a quantity of papers should be made outright, allowing for no return of unsold copies.

*Gambling.*—We condemn the practice of securing subscriptions through the sale or gift of chances.

*Complimentaries.*—Complimentary copies should not be sent to doctors, lawyers, ministers, postal clerks, police or court officials for news or mailing privileges.

IN ESTIMATING

*Definition.*—Estimating is the science of computing costs. Its conclusion is the price.

*Basis.*—We do not favor the establishment of a minimum rate card for advertising which would be uniform among publishers, but we do favor a more thorough understanding of the subject of costs, and commend to our members the labors of the American Printers' Cost Commission of the First International Cost Congress recently held in Chicago. Let us learn our costs and then each establish a rate card based upon our investment and the cost of production, having no consideration for the comparative ability of the advertisers to pay, or the seminews nature of the advertisement.

*Quantity Discount.*—We consider it unwise to allow discounts greater than 10 per cent from the rate of first insertion for succeeding insertions.

*Definition.*—News is the impartial report of the activities of mind, men, and matter which do not offend the moral sensibilities of the more enlightened people.

*Lies.*—We condemn against truth:

(1) The publication of fake illustrations of men and events of news interest, however marked their similarity, without an accompanying statement that they are not real pictures of the event or person, but only suggestive imitations.

(2) The publication of fake interviews made up of the assumed views of an individual, without his consent.

(3) The publication of interviews in quotations unless the exact, approved language of the interviewed be used. When an interview is not an exact quotation it should be obvious in the reading that *only* the thought and impression of the interviewer is being reported.

(4) The issuance of fake news dispatches, whether the same have for their purpose the influencing of stock quotations, elections, or the sale of securities or merchandise. Some of the greatest advertising in the world has been stolen through the news columns in the form of dispatches from unscrupulous press agents. Millions have been made on the rise and fall of stock quotations caused by newspaper lies, sent out by designing reporters.

*Injustice.*—We condemn as against justice:

(1) The practice of reporters making detectives and spies of themselves in their endeavors to investigate the guilt or innocence of those under suspicion.

Reporters should not enter the domain of law in the apprehension of criminals. They should not become a detective or sweating agency for the purpose of furnishing excitement to the readers.

No suspect should have his hope of a just liberty foiled through the great prejudice which the public has formed against him because of the press verdict slyly couched in the news report, even before his arrest.

We should not even by insinuation interpret as facts our conclusions, unless by signature we become personally responsible for them. Exposition, explanation, and interpretation should be

left to the field of the expert or specialist with a full consciousness of his personal responsibility.

(2) The publication of the rumors and common gossips or the assumptions of a reporter relative to a suspect pending his arrest or the final culmination of his trial. A staff of reporters is not a detective agency, and the right of a suspect to a fair and impartial trial is often confounded by a reporter's practice of printing every ill-founded rumor of which he gets wind.

*Indecencies.*—Classification: For the sake of clearness and order, crimes with which we will be concerned may be divided into those which offend against the *public trust* (such as bribery, defalcation, or embezzlement by a public official); those which offend against *private institutions* or *employers* (which are also often defalcations and betrayals of confidence), and crimes which offend against *private morality* most often centering around the family relation.

(1) In dealing with the suspicions against *public officials* or trustees we urge that *only facts* put in their *true relation* and records be used in the news reports.

No presumption or conclusion of the reporter should be allowed to enter, even though it has all the elements of a correct conclusion.

Conclusions and presumptions should be placed in interviews with the identity of their author easily apparent.

If an editor desires to draw a conclusion on the case, let him sign it. Do not hide behind the impersonality of the paper with your personal opinions.

(2) In dealing with the suspicions against agents of private institutions, facts alone, put in their true relation, should again be used.

But in this class of stories suspicions and conclusions should be confined to those of the parties directly interested, and no statement of one party to the affair reflecting upon another should be published without at the same time publishing a statement of the accused relative thereto.

The comment of those not directly involved should not be published previous to the arrest or pending the trial.

(3) In dealing with the offenses against private morality, we should refuse to print any record of the matter, however true, until the warrant has been filed or the arrest made, and

even then our report should contain only an epitome of the charges by the plaintiff and the answers by the defendant, preferably secured from their respective attorneys.

No society gossips or scandals, however true, should ever be published concerning such cases.

However prominent the principals, offenses against private morality should never receive *first-page position* and their details should be eliminated as much as possible.

Certain crimes against private morality which are revolting to our finer sensibilities should be ignored entirely; however, in the event of their having become public with harmful exaggerations, we may make an elementary statement, couched in the least suggestive language.

In no case should the reckless daring of the suspect be lionized.

(4) Except when the suspect has escaped, his picture should never be printed.

## FOR THE EDITOR

### VIEWS

*Definition.*—Views are the impressions, beliefs, or opinions which are published in a paper, whether from the editorial staffs of the same, outside contributors, or secured interviews.

*A Distinction.*—We hold that whenever a publication confines the bulk of its views to any particular line of thought, class of views, or side of a moot question, it becomes to that extent a class publication, and inasmuch ceases to be a newspaper.

*An Explanation.*—You will note by our definition of news that it is the impartial portrayal of the decent activities of mind, men, and matter. This definition applied to class publications would be changed by replacing the word *impartial* with the word *partial.*

In this section we will deal with *impartiality* in the presentation of the decent activities of the mind of the community—with the views or editorial policy of a paper.

*Responsibility.*—Whereas, a view or conclusion is the product of some mind or minds, and whereas the value and significance of a view is dependent upon the known merit of its author or authors, the reader is entitled and has the right to know the personal identity of the author, whether by the signature in a

communication, the statement of the reporter in an interview, or the caption in a special article and *the paper as such* should in no wise become an advocate.

*Influence (editorial).*—We should avoid permitting large institutions or persons to own stock in or make loans to our publishing business if we have reasonable grounds to believe that their interests would be seriously affected by any other than a true presentation of all news and free willingness to present every possible point of view under signature or interview.

*Influence (reportorial).*—No reporter should be retained who accepts any courtesies, unusual favors, opportunities for self-gain, or side employment from any factors whose interests would be affected by the manner in which his reports are made.

*Deception.*—We should not allow the *presumed* knowledge on the part of the interviewed that we are newspaper men to permit us to quote them without their explicit permission, but where such knowledge is certain we insist upon our right to print the views unless directly forbidden.

*Faith With Interviewed.*—An interview or statement should not be displayed previous to its publication without the permission of the author.

*Bounds of Publicity.*—A man's name and portrait are his private property and the point where they cease to be private and become public should be defined for our association.

## The State of Washington

The members of the Washington State Press Association, believing in journalism as a profession and its opportunities for service to our state, do hereby establish the following code of rules and ethics for government of professional practice as obligatory to every member of the association:

To give due credit for all matter copied from other papers or magazines.

Not to speak disparagingly through editorial or news columns of competing papers or editors.

Not to engage help employed by a competitor without first informing the competitor and giving him an opportunity, if he wishes, to retain his employe.

Not to cut prices below published rates.

To investigate all questionable advertising and refuse space to misleading and illegitimate advertisements.

Not to publish or claim circulation in excess of actual figures.

To strive for no circulation or success that is not founded on the highest justice and morality.

To use every endeavor to elevate the standards of journalism and to so conduct our papers that competitors may find it wise, profitable, and conducive to happiness to emulate our example.

## The Detroit News

The editor-in-chief announced the following:

The paper should be:

Vigorous, but not Vicious.

Interesting, but not Sensational.

Fearless, but Fair.

Accurate as far as human effort can obtain accuracy.

Striving ever to gain and impart information.

As bright as possible, but never sacrificing solid information for brilliancy.

Looking for the Uplifting rather than the Depraved things of Life.

We should work to have the word *reliable* stamped all over every page of the paper.

The place to commence this is with the staff members: First getting men and women of character to do the writing and editing, and then training them in our way of thinking and handling news and other reading matter.

Nothing here is intended as a reflection on the present staff or the paper we have been getting out; we have a good staff and a good paper; the aim is to improve both as much as possible.

If you make an error, you have two duties to perform: one to the person misrepresented and one to your reading public. Never leave the reader of The News misinformed on any subject. If you wrongfully infer that a man has done something that he did not do, or has said something that he did not say, you do him an injustice—that's one. But you also do thousands of readers an injustice, leaving them misinformed as to the character of the man dealt with. Corrections should never be

given grudgingly. Always make them cheerfully, fully, and in larger type than the error, if any difference.

If a reporter gets drunk, the people do not say, "There goes So-and-So," calling him by name; they say, "There goes a News reporter." That reflects on the entire staff; that robs the paper of a certain amount of its standing, of a certain amount of its reputation for reliability. No one has confidence in the work of a drunken man. Anyone on the editorial staff who gets drunk once or who wilfully prints a misstatement of any kind should not be retained on the staff a minute.

The American people want to *know,* to learn, to get information. To quote a writer: "Your opinion is worth no more than your information." Give them your information and let them draw their own conclusions. Comment should be more along the line of enlightenment by well-marshalled facts, and by telling the readers what relation an act of today has to an act of yesterday. Let them come to their own conclusions as far as possible.

No issue is worth advocating that is not strong enough to withstand all the facts that the opposition to it can throw against it. Our readers should be well informed on both sides of *every* issue.

Kindly, helpful suggestions will often direct officials in the right, where nagging will make them stay stubbornly on the wrong side. That does not mean that there should be any lack of diligence in watching for, and opposition to, intentional crooks.

A staff can only be good and strong by having every part of it strong. The moment it becomes evident that a man, either by force of circumstance or because of his own character, does not fit into our organization, you do him a kindness and do justice to the paper by letting him know, so he can go to a calling in which he can succeed, and he will not be in the way of filling the place with a competent man.

*Make the paper good all the way through,* so there will not be disappointment on the part of a reporter if his story is not found on the first page, but so he will feel it must have merit to get into the paper at all. Avoid making it a "front-page paper."

Stories should be brief, but not meager. Tell the story, all of it, in as few words as possible.

Nature makes facts more interesting than any reporter can imagine them. There is an interesting feature in every story, if you will but dig it out. If you don't get it, it is because you don't dig deep enough.

The most valuable asset of any paper is its reputation for telling the truth; the only way to have that reputation is to tell the truth. Untruth, due to carelessness, or excessive imagination, injures the paper as much as though intentional.

Everyone with a complaint should be given a respectful and kindly hearing; especial consideration should be given the poor and lowly, who may be less able to present their claims than those more favored in life. A man of prominence and education knows how to get into the office and present his complaint. A washerwoman may come to the door, timidly, haltingly, scarcely knowing what to do, and all the while her complaint may be as just as that of the other complainant, perhaps more so. She should be received kindly and helped to present what she has to say.

Simple, plain language is strongest and best. A man of meager education can understand it, while the man of higher education, usually reading a paper in the evening after a day's work, will read it with relish. There is never any need of using big words to show off one's learning. The object of a story or an editorial is to inform or convince; but it is hard to do either if the reader has to study over a big word or an involved sentence. Stick to plain English all the time. A few readers may understand and appreciate a Latin or French quotation, or one from some other foreign language, but the big mass of our readers are the plain people and such a quotation would be lost on the majority.

Be fair. Don't let the libel laws be your measure as to the printing of a story, but let fairness be your measure. If you are fair, you need not worry any about libel laws.

Always give the other fellow a hearing. He may be in the wrong, but even that may be a matter of degree. It wouldn't be fair to picture him as all black when there may be mitigating circumstances.

It is not necessary to tell the people that we are honest, or bright, or alert, or that a story appeared exclusively in our paper. If true, the public will find it out. An honest man does not have to advertise his honesty eternally.

Time heals all things but a woman's damaged reputation. Be careful and cautious and fair and decent in dealing with any man's reputation, but be doubly so—and then some—when a woman's name is at stake. Do not by direct statement, jest, or careless reference, raise a question mark after any woman's name if it can be avoided—and it usually can be. Even if a woman slips, be generous; it may be a crisis in her life. Printing the story may drive her to despair; kindly treatment may leave her with hope. No story is worth ruining a woman's life —or man's either.

Keep the paper clean in language and thought. Profane or suggestive words are not necessary. When in doubt, think of a 13-year-old girl reading what you are writing.

Do not look on newspaper work as a "game," of pitilessly printing that on which you are only half-informed, for the mere sake of beating some other paper, but take it rather as a serious, constructive work in which you are to use all the energy and diligence needed to get all the worth-while information for your readers at the earliest possible moment at which you can do so and have it reliable.

Nothing should ever be taken from another publication without giving full credit. Merely crediting a piece of writing to "Exchange" is not fair.

Elections coming on Tuesday, no candidate or party should be permitted to print new charges or statements later than the Friday before election. No paper should print anything about anybody without allowing ample time for an answer.

This is not intended as a set of rules. Rules kill individuality, and nothing is so valuable on a newspaper staff as good, strong individuality. This is intended as an expression of what The News and The News Tribune should be, leaving it to each to enter into the spirit of the work, shaping his mental attitude so as to help bring about the results desired.

## The Hearst Papers

William R. Hearst's personal instructions to be found in all his offices:

Make a paper for the nicest kind of people—for the great middle class.

Don't print a lot of dull stuff that they are supposed to like and don't.

Omit things that will offend nice people. Avoid coarseness and slang, and a low tone. The most sensational news can be told if it is written properly.

Talk as a gentleman should. Be reliable in all things, as well as entertaining and amiable.

When a wrong picture is brought in by a reporter, or a wrong picture is used, through lack of care or neglect; or when grossly inaccurate statements are made by a reporter, or copy-reader, such reader or reporter will be asked for his immediate resignation.

Do not exaggerate. Care must be taken to state accurately the truth. If an eight hundred thousand dollar transaction is described, do not call it a million dollar transaction. If someone dies leaving two million, do not say he left ten million.

Make the paper helpful and kindly. Don't scold and forever complain and attack in your news columns. Leave that to the editorial page.

Be fair and impartial. Don't make a paper for Democrats or Republicans, or Independent Leaguers. Make a paper for all the people and give unbiased news of all creeds and parties. Try to do this in such a conspicuous manner that it will be noticed and commented upon.

Please be accurate. Compare the statements in your paper with those in other papers, and find out which is correct. Discharge reporters and copyreaders who are persistently inaccurate.

Don't allow exaggeration. It is a cheap and ineffective substitute for real interest. Reward reporters who can make the truth interesting, and weed out those who cannot.

Please sum up your paper every day, at the evening conference, and find wherein it is distinctly better than other papers. If it is not distinctly better you have missed that day. Lay your plans to make it distinctly better the next day.

If you cannot show conclusively your own paper's superiority you may be sure the public will never discover it.

A succession of superior papers will surely tell. When you beat your rivals one day try hard to beat them the next, for success depends upon a complete victory.

## The Dayton Journal

This newspaper must first of all be clean, it must be fair, it must be honest and without malice in its opinions and expressions, and it must at all times devote itself unflinchingly and fearlessly to the public service in the interest of the masses of the people.

It must always combat evil and injustice.

It must always fight for progress and reform.

It must never tolerate corruption.

It must be in sympathy with the poor and the unfortunate.

It must stand for good government, civic patriotism, and the public welfare.

For Dayton it must always stand, with unselfish devotion, for the achievement of the finest ideals, of every high purpose, of every enterprise, of every step in the march of progress.

In National affairs: The truest patriotism, and the American principles of freedom, equality, tolerance, and undying love of country.

E. G. Burkam.

## The New York Globe

A complete, accurate, dependable newspaper.

A fearless and independent newspaper.

An interesting newspaper.

An uncontrolled newspaper.

A newspaper ever seeking improvement.

A newspaper made primarily for those who buy it.

A newspaper with intelligence and with a soul and a heart.

A progressive newspaper.

An optimistic newspaper.

A successful and prosperous newspaper beyond temptation.

## The Sacramento Bee

The Bee demands from all its writers accuracy before anything else. Better lose an item than make a splurge one day and correct it next.

Equally with that, it demands absolute fairness in the treatment of news. Reports must not be colored to please a friend or wrong an enemy.

Don't editorialize in the news columns. An accurate report is its own best editorial.

Don't exaggerate. Every exaggeration hurts immeasurably the cause it pretends to help.

If a mistake is made, it must be corrected. It is as much the duty of a Bee writer to work to the rectification of a wrong done by an error in an item as it is first to use every precaution not to allow that error to creep in.

Be extremely careful of the name and reputation of women. Even when dealing with the unfortunate, remember that so long as she commits no crime other than her own sin against chastity, she is entitled at least to pity.

Sneers at race, or religion, or physical deformity, will not be tolerated. "Dago," "Mick," "Sheeny," even "Chink" or "Jap," these are absolutely forbidden. This rule of regard for the feelings of others must be observed in every avenue of news, under any and all conditions.

There is a time for humor and there is a time for seriousness. The Bee likes snap and ginger at all times. It will not tolerate flippancy on serious subjects on any occasion.

The furnisher of an item is entitled to a hearing for his side at all times, not championship. If the latter is ever deemed necessary, the editorial department will attend to it.

Interviews given the paper at the paper's request are to be considered immune from sneers or criticism.

In every accusation against a public official or private citizen, make every effort to have the statement of the accused given prominence in the original item.

In the case of charges which are not ex-officio or from a public source, it is better to lose an item than to chance the doing of a wrong.

Consider The Bee always as a tribunal that desires to do justice to all; that fears far more to do injustice to the poorest beggar than to clash swords with wealthy injustice.

## The Tampa Times

Written by Charles G. Mullen, General Manager

In our determination to make The Times a great and good newspaper, let us be animated by a spirit of charity toward the weaknesses and shortcomings of our fellowmen so long as their actions are more injurious to themselves than to the public welfare;

Printing nothing that will injure or reflect upon the reputation of any man or woman without thorough and painstaking

investigation of the facts, remembering that it is better to miss a good story than to run the risk of damaging the name and reputation of an innocent person.

Abhorring the gossip monger and the purveyor of neighborhood scandal.

Handling sex crime, and revolting details of all kinds, so as to offend good taste as little as we may, in the knowledge that many of our readers are pure-minded girls and women, and that an intentional appeal to the salacious is indecent journalism.

Refusing to create sensations out of trivialities, or allow motives of any kind to inspire overplaying of the news.

Vowing solemnly to ourselves that ours shall be an honest and truthful newspaper in which shall be printed nothing but well established facts, emphasizing constantly that guessing is unpardonable and the printing of irresponsible rumors a journalistic crime.

In all of which meriting, as individuals, the respect of our associates and the public by fairness to our enemies, cleanness in our purposes and unswerving honesty every minute of every hour.

As the character of an individual is built by his thoughts and actions, so is the character of a newspaper built up by the printed word.

The good name of The Times must be kept above reproach.

## The St. Louis Post-Dispatch

The following appears at the head of the editorial columns:

### THE POST-DISPATCH PLATFORM

I know that my retirement will make no difference in its cardinal principles, that it will always fight for progress and reform, never tolerate injustice or corruption, always fight demagogues of all parties, never belong to any party, always oppose privileged classes and public plunderers, never lack sympathy with the poor, always remain devoted to the public welfare, never be satisfied with merely printing news, always be drastically independent; never be afraid to attack wrong, whether by predatory plutocracy or predatory poverty.

Joseph Pulitzer.

April 10, 1907.

## The New York Evening Post

Since its first issue, November 16, 1801, the following has appeared at the head of the editorial page:

The design of this paper is to diffuse among the people correct information on all interesting subjects, to inculcate just principles in religion, morals, and politics; and to cultivate a taste for sound literature.

## The Old Public Ledger

When William V. McKean became managing director of the Philadelphia Public Ledger after its purchase by George W. Childs in 1864, he wrote the following for guidance of his staff:

Always deal fairly and frankly with the public.

A newspaper, to be trusted and respected, must give trustworthy information and counsel. It is a serious thing to mislead the people.

Understate your case rather than overstate it.

Have a sure voucher for every statement, especially for censure.

There is a wide gap between accusation of crime and actual guilt.

Deal gently with weak and helpless offenders.

Before making up judgment, take care to understand both sides, and remember there are at least two sides. If you attempt to decide, you are bound to know both.

Do not say you know when you have only heard.

Never proceed on mere hearsay. Rumor is only an index to be followed by inquiry.

Take care to be right. Better be right than quickest with "the news" which is often false. It is bad to be late, but worse to be wrong.

Go to first-hand and original sources for information; if you cannot, then get as near as you can.

It is the reporter's office to chronicle events, to collect facts; comments on the facts are reserved for the editor.

Let the facts and reasoning tell the story rather than rhetorical flourish.

Don't be too positive. Remember always it is possible you may err.

All persons have equal rights in the court of conscience, as well as in courts of law.

Never add fuel to the fire of popular excitement.

There is nothing more demoralizing in public affairs than habitual disregard of law.

Uphold the authorities in maintaining public order, rectify wrongs through the law. If the law is defective, better mend it than break it.

Nearly always there is law enough. It is the failure to enforce it that makes most mischief.

Grace and purity of style are always desirable, but never allow rhetoric to displace clear, direct, forcible expression.

Plain words are essential for unlearned people, and these are just as plain to the most accomplished.

The public welfare has higher claims than any party cry.

There is no need, and therefore no excuse, for mob law in American communities.

Numerous as bad men may be, remember they are but few compared with the millions of the people.

## The Journalist's Creed

By Walter Williams

I believe in the profession of journalism.

I believe that the public journal is a public trust; that all connected with it are, to the full measure of their responsibility, trustees for the public; that acceptance of lesser service than the public service is betrayal of this trust.

I believe that clear thinking, and clear statement, accuracy, and fairness are fundamental to good journalism.

I believe that a journalist should write only what he holds in his heart to be true.

I believe that suppression of the news for any consideration other than the welfare of society is indefensible.

I believe that no one should write as a journalist what he would not say as a gentleman; that bribery by one's own pocketbook is as much to be avoided as bribery by the pocketbook of another; that individual responsibility may not be escaped by pleading another's instruction or another's dividends.

I believe that advertising, news, and editorial columns should alike serve the best interests of the readers; that a single stand-

ard of helpful truth and clearness should prevail for all; that the supreme test of journalism is the measure of its public service.

I believe that the journalism which succeeds best—and best deserves success—fears God and honors man; is stoutly independent, unmoved by pride of opinion, or greed of power; constructive, tolerant, but never careless; self-controlled, patient, always respectful of its readers, always unafraid; is quickly indignant at injustice; is unswayed by the appeal of privilege, or the clamor of the mob; seeks to give every man a chance, and, as far as law and honest wages and recognition of human brotherhood can make it so, an equal chance; is profoundly patriotic, while sincerely promoting international good will, and cementing world comradeship; is a journalism of humanity, of and for today's world.

## President Harding's Creed

Remember there are two sides to every question. Get them both.

Be truthful. Get the facts.

Mistakes are inevitable, but strive for accuracy. I would rather have one story exactly right than a hundred half wrong.

Be decent, be fair, be generous.

Boost—don't knock.

There is good in everybody. Bring out the good and never needlessly hurt the feelings of anybody.

In reporting a political gathering, give the facts, tell the story as it is, not as you would like to have it. Treat all parties alike. If there are politics to be played, we will play them in our editorial columns.

Treat all religious matters reverently.

If it can possibly be avoided, never bring ignominy on an innocent man or child, in telling of the misdeeds or misfortunes of a relative.

Don't wait to be asked, but do it without the asking; and, above all, be clean and never let a dirty word or suggestive story get into type.

I want this paper (the Marion Star) to be so conducted that it can go into any home without destroying the innocence of any child.

## William Allen White's News Creed

Omission of mention of two big divorce cases from its news columns brought a letter to the Emporia Gazette which contained the following paragraph:

Are you shielding them because they are big bugs? Does the fact that a man has money keep his name out of the paper when he runs around with other women and when a poor devil gets drunk you slap his name in the paper?

And here we have Editor William Allen White's reply to this reader:

That is a fair question. The answer is this: For 26 years The Gazette has made an invariable rule to keep divorce scandals out of the local news. Also, we have had an invariable rule to print the actual news of divorces, the names of the parties, the causes briefly stated, and the disposition of the children, if any. The community has a right to this news. But the harrowing details that mark the wreck of any home are not news; they are often salacious, sometimes debasing, and always abnormal. We have felt that the wreck of a home is bad enough; but to pry among the wreckage is ghoulish. So readers of The Gazette who want Emporia divorce scandals elaborated should subscribe for some other paper.

Now about the drunk: The man who fills up with whisky and goes about making a fool of himself becomes a public nuisance. If permitted to continue it, he becomes a public charge. The public has an interest in him. Publicity is one of the things that keeps him straight. His first offense is ignored in The Gazette, but his second offense is recorded when he is arrested, and no matter how high or how low he is, his name goes in. We have printed this warning to drinkers time and again; so when they come around asking us to think of their wives and children, or their sick mothers or poor old fathers, we always tell them to remember that they had fair warning, and if their fathers and mothers and wives and children are nothing to them before taking, they are nothing to us after taking.

The bum and the divorce are treated always from the standpoint of the community interest.

## Charles A. Dana

To the Wisconsin Editorial Association, 1888:

There is no system of maxims or professional rules that I know of that is laid down for the guidance of the journalist. The physician has his system of ethics and that sublime oath of Hippocrates which human wisdom has never transcended. The lawyer also has his code of ethics, and the rules of the courts, and the rules of practice which he is instructed in; but I have

never met with a system of maxims that seemed to me to be perfectly adapted to the general direction of a newspaper man. I have written down a few principles which occurred to me. These, with your permission, gentlemen, I will read for the benefit of the young newspaper men here tonight:

Get the news, get all the news, get nothing but the news.

Copy nothing from another publication without perfect credit.

Never print an interview without the knowledge and consent of the party interviewed.

Never print a paid advertisement as news matter. Let every advertisement appear as advertisement; no sailing under false colors.

Never attack the weak or defenseless, either by argument, by invective, or by ridicule, unless there is some absolute public necessity for so doing.

Fight for your opinions, but do not believe that they contain the whole truth, or the only truth.

Support your party if you have one, but do not think all the good men are in it, and all the bad ones outside of it.

Above all, know and believe that humanity is advancing, that there is progress in human life and human affairs, and that, as sure as God lives, the future will be greater and better than the present and the past.

Mr. Dana, at Cornell University, 1894, said:

Never be in a hurry.

Hold fast to the Constitution. Stand by the Stars and Stripes. Above all, stand for liberty, whatever happens.

A word that is not spoken never does any mischief.

All the goodness of a good egg cannot make up for the badness of a bad one.

If you find you have been wrong, don't fear to say so.

In other words, don't loaf, don't cheat, don't dissemble, don't bully, don't be narrow.

## George Edward Graham

There are two golden rules for every newspaper man, and in my acquaintance with leaders of the craft I fail to recall any who have successfully evaded these precepts. They are:

*Never betray a confidence.*

*Never deliberately pervert or misrepresent facts.*

These are surely the ethics of the profession. The observance of the first rule means a wide acquaintance with and the absolute trust of reputable public men—conditions which result in easy access to important news, and in an enhanced degree of accuracy through "inside information" which can in no other way be achieved. Once a newspaper man is thoroughly trusted, the duty of gathering news is lightened day by day, and he gradually becomes the confidant of many an official's plans, often long before they are given to the public.

Likewise, the second rule, if closely adhered to, gains for a man the confidence and regard of all classes, while a disregard of it and of the truth means finally for him annihilation as a good newspaper man, together with loss of the esteem of the community and probably also of his own self-respect.

## Washington Gladden

### The Elements of a Noble Vocation

Have I not pointed out four great and worthy tasks of American journalism, in the performance of which it may greatly aid in purifying and invigorating public opinion?

First, to teach the people to avoid exaggeration and violent speech, and to cultivate moderate and rational modes of expression.

Second, to resist the tendencies which dementalize democracy, and which substitute the mob-mind for the deliberative habit.

Third, to hold the popular judgment firmly to the truth that character and manhood and not money and popularity are the central values of human existence.

Fourth, to turn the thoughts of men more and more from the negative virtue of detecting and exposing the evil to the positive virtue of discerning and praising the good.

These are the elements of a noble vocation. If I have succeeded in putting into intelligible words of my own the *deepest purposes* of many newspaper editors, I have accomplished what I set out to do. I offer them the right hand of fellowship as builders here on earth of the Republic of God.

## Ohio City Editors

The Ohio City Editors' Association adopted the following:

*Be It Resolved,* That we favor the drafting of a code of professional ethics to be made a part of the bylaws of this organization, wherein we go on record as opposed to "faking," reprinting articles from exchanges without giving credit, the publication of unfounded rumors, and in favor of the general uplift of the traditions of the profession.

That we consider accuracy the prime requisite of the journalistic profession, and that justice and fairness should be so promoted by our publications as to increase the confidence of the reading public.

## Ohio State University Journalism Students

A class of about thirty-five students who have been taking the course of Newspaper Ethics and Principles given in the department of journalism of the Ohio State University formulated a code which is presented here. Subjects for the various articles of the code were prepared by the students and put together. Then the class took on the form of a parliamentary body to consider the articles one by one. After much amending the following document was approved:

### SUGGESTED CODE OF ETHICS

#### PREAMBLE

With the growth of the newspaper into an influential institution the profession of journalism has become one of widespread opportunities and duties. The Press exists by the sanction of the public. If it is to prove its right to such sanction and hence to existence, it must adhere to high standards of conduct, for only by such a course can it carry out its obligation to the public which supports it. The standards which must govern journalism are fundamentally those of accuracy and fairness, but as the definition and application of these principles are desirable it is the purpose of this code to set down certain canons with the understanding that they do not cover the whole field.

#### I. PUBLIC SERVICE

A newspaper should have as its constant purpose the rendering of public service in the way of political, social, and economic

improvement and in the dissemination of facts and editorial comment that will lead to the awakening of public conscience and public realization of duty and patriotism. It should be fearless in the stand it takes for good. It should foster all movements toward these desirable goals and should wage unrestricted warfare against movements that would result disastrously for the community, nation, or mankind.

### II. TRUTH

The newspaper must preserve accuracy and fairness in news and editorial. Fidelity to the truth is of the first importance. Ethical journalism cannot excuse preventable error, nor countenance dishonesty in its own methods.

### III. IMPARTIALITY

If a straight news-story has more than one side, all should be printed in the same issue. It is not fair to print one version in one issue and another in the following, as there is no assurance that each reader will see every edition.

### IV. JUSTICE

Every injustice done by the newspaper should be corrected at the earliest possible moment, conspicuously and ungrudgingly. This is not merely to avoid a threatened lawsuit but to insure justice and fairness to all.

### V. MALICE

The newspaper must not show malice, for by so doing it displays unfairness and cowardice—unfairness to the readers who may not perceive the motives, cowardice because the object of its malice has not an equal opportunity for reply.

### VI. DISTORTION

News should not be distorted nor colored. The facts should be obtained and incorporated into a straightforward unbiased story. The news columns are for facts and the editorial columns are for argument, opinion, and comment.

### VII. TRIVIALITY

Triviality in news and editorial should be avoided. The practice of unduly emphasizing trifling subjects distorts true values and turns the attention from the significant events of community, nation, and world.

### VIII. VENALITY

Any form of bribery to bring about the suppression or to influence the presentation of news or editorial is forbidden. This means the acceptance of money, or its equivalent in business, political, or social favors.

### IX. INVASION OF PRIVACY

Privacy must not be wantonly invaded. Although it is necessary for the good of the community that evil be exposed the newspaper must never subject innocent persons to disgrace, ridicule, or contempt by unwarranted publicity.

### X. KEEPING CONFIDENCES

Journalists should keep sacred all information given to them in confidence. Such information should not be published nor used without the consent of the informant, but care should be exercised not to accept confidences that will embarrass the writer or the newspaper.

### XI. ADVERTISING AND CIRCULATION

All advertising should be honest, genuine, and clean. The newspaper should exercise the right to revise or reject copy that may be inimical to the moral and commercial interests of the community. Circulation statements should be truthful and accessible to all interested persons.